*177 439 Throughout the time period under consideration, commercial trade goods have been incorporated, mostly by way of substitution for their [412] local equivalent. Axeheads, cutlasses, knives, iron griddle pans, [415] cotton cloth, and shotguns reached the population in varying degrees [175] at the time of Gillin's study (1934:332). These trade goods did not lose their popularity. They have been added to by other external resources and their quantity and availability have been increased. [163] Eventually, a flow of external goods and services into the Upper [161] Barama River area has resulted in an increased birth rate and an [511] increasing population size, an improved standard of living, and [621] changes in the social organization of the population.

*177 175 443 [484] However, markets have been introduced and controlled by external agents. As has already been explained, the Upper Barama River Caribs do not have easy access to regional markets. They do not travel to transact regional exchanges. Rather, they have depended on the opportunities provided by non-Carib middlemen who reside in the Upper Barama River area and who have good access to the limited transportation and communication facilities. As characteristic of the conveyance of regional exchanges into remote areas, market opportunities have been highly personalized. This was characteristic of the early period of porknocking activities and the existence of the gold [657] companies. Personalized market networks continue to be associated with government programs and services at Baramita Air Strip.

*177 195 437 *439 Market Opportunities Provided by the Early Gold Seekers

The earliest regional exchanges reported for these Caribs involved

Baird further sought to secure Carib clients with special benefits. He tended to the emergencies of his workers and their families day and night. From time to time, Baird made trips to Georgetown possible by allowing workers to ride one way free on the charter flights which left the air pool and later the air strip empty. In 1966, he started the first school. It was built at In Time and staffed by a teacher Baird privately paid.

Baird's trade store was operated primarily as a service for the workers. Local provisions were bought and sold at the same price. This policy was used also with many foods flown in from Georgetown. The thirty-two or more workers who earned about $4 a day had an income of approximately $1200 a year. As these workers had only small gardens and their wives and other members of their households enjoyed a great deal of leisure, most provisions were purchased. Cassava bread, the staple, sold for 16¢ a disk which is about a half inch thick and two feet in diameter. Local fish and meat sold for about 40¢ a pound. Rice, sugar, salt fish, canned milk, tinned sardines, and other foods were available. The store stocked a variety of implements for hunting, fishing, farming, and doing household chores. It also stocked cigarettes, matches, soap, cloth lengths, and manufactured clothes. Baird extended each worker up to $100 credit and arranged special purchases. These included guns[2] and radios. One Carib man bought a portable, manually operated Singer sewing machine in this manner. As there was no opportunity for investment, a worker would hide away somewhere about his house any cash he did not immediately use to make purchases.

The trade store was the main vehicle for the involvement of the remainder of the population in regional exchange. With the establishment of Baird's enterprise, there was a constant call for local foods which the trade store stocked. Caribs not employed at the mine were then able to sell these foods on a more or less planned basis. The residents of Aranka, Baramita, and later the Air Strip, did this regularly. Caribs in the more remote settlements made more infrequent trips. However, the quantities required were limited. No special fields were cut nor special crops planted. Part of the regular subsistence production was used for these exchange purposes. Also, there operated informal consignment agreements. When a supply of meat, cassava, plantains, yams, or whatever ran low, individual men were invited to bring these to the store. Often no money changed hands. Rather, small accounts were kept. In addition to exchanges centralized by the trade store, some exchanges occurred directly between Caribs. The prices used were those at the trade store. Also, for a short time, the missionaries contributed to the market opportunities in the area by occasionally hiring a few laborers, by buying some local handicraft items, and by selling food and clothing.

Before the mine closed in 1969, one other development occurred which further involved this population in regional exchange networks. A local administrative structure, devised and implemented by the Ministry of Local Government, has been imposed on Amerindian populations to promote national political integration.[3] Amerindian offices were first introduced among the Upper Barama River Caribs with an election held at In Time in October 1967. From among four

*177 the small aircraft. As is common in the handling and transportation
657 of tropical fish, many would die. Up to as many as ten percent of
226 the fish would be lost in transit to Georgetown, and the proprietor
439 cut the price to 4 1/2¢ per live fish he received. After a few thousand catfish had been sent to Georgetown, tropical fish operations were suspended.

*177 With this proliferation of small market opportunities, a money
438 economy continued to develop in the Upper Barama River area after the
436 closing of the mine. A government trade store is now located at
*177 Baramita Air Strip and operated by the Project Officer. During
657 1970-71, the minimal stock of tinned sardines, salt fish, flour, rice,
443 sugar, cigarettes, matches, ammunition, cutlasses and knives, cloth
438 lengths, pants and shirts, school exercise books and pencils was
439 sometimes depleted by delay in the shipment of supplies from George-
*177 town. More often, Caribs did not have the cash to make purchases.
436 Money tended to be a more specialized means of exchange. Only it could
[182] be used to purchase commercial goods. As a consequence of the limited circulation of money among this population, there occurred a renewed
*177 reliance on bush resources for food and tools. Secondary networks
438 for the exchange of local provision foods greatly disappeared. A
[464] marked separation of those employed and unemployed during the mining
*177 economy was lost. In contrast, a diversity of limited opportunities
438 to directly participate in regional exchanges was available more
439 generally to the population at Baramita Air Strip. In this manner,
[657] the regional economy among the Upper Barama River Caribs has been supported by the national government since the closing of the mine.